

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
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EB-08 /116 W

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R 231208Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0417
INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC
AMCONGEN BOMBAY
AMCONGEN CALCUTTA
AMCONGEN MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NEW DELHI 4595

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPER, IN, NK, SK
SUBJECT: VISIT OF DPRK VICE PRESIDENT KANG TO INDIA

REF: (A) STATE 60433; (B) KATHMANDU 1238; (C) ISLAMABAD 2735

1. KANG RYANG UK, DPRK VICE PRESIDENT, CONCLUDED A SIX-DAY
VISIT TO INDIA MARCH 17, KANG AND HIS PARTY VISITED CALCUTTA,
THE BOKARO STEEL PLANT AND AGRA, AND SPENT THE LAST TWO DAYS
IN NEW DELHI. KANG, WHO WAS AKCOMPANIED BY MINISTER OF FINANCE
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KIM GYENG RYEN AND DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS KIM
HYENG RYUL, CALLED ON PRIME MINISTER DESAI AND FOREIGN MINISTER
VAJPAYEE, AND ALSO MET WITH THE MINISTERS OF COMMERCE, AGRI-
CULTURE AND EDUCATION.

2. AT A BANQUET GIVEN BY VICE PRESIDENT JATTI, KANG SAID THAT
THE QUESTION OF KOREA'S REUNIFICATION "MUST BE SETTLED BY THE

KOREAN PEOPLE THEMSELVES INDEPENDENTLY ON THE BASIS OF DEMOCRACY AND BY PEACEFUL MEANS". HE ALSO SAID THAT "THE OCCUPATION OF SOUTH KOREA BY THE FOREIGN TROOPS IS THE MAIN OBSTACLE BLOCKING THE INDEPENDENT AND PEACEFUL REUNIFICATION OF KOREA". WANG VOWED THAT NORTH KOREA WILL FIGHT TOGETHER WITH THE INDIAN PEOPLE IN THE STRUGGLE "AGAINST ALL SORTS OF AGGRESSION AND INTERFERENCES" AND HE TOUTED THE STRUGGLE OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES AGAINST SAID IMPERIALISM WHEREVER" THE IMPERIALISTS ARE INTENSIFYING THEIR MACHINATIONS TO DIVIDE AND DESTROY THEM AT PRESENT". HIS REMARKS, HOWEVER, WERE RELATIVELY MILD IN COMPARISON TO THOSE REPORTED FROM KATHMANDU. (REF.B). VICE PRESIDENT JATTI SAID THAT INDIA WAS AWARE OF THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF KOREA TO END THE "PRESENT ARTIFICIAL DIVISION" OF KOREA AND THAT "INDIA HAS CONSISTENTLY SUPPORTED ALL EFFORTS FOR THE PEACEFUL REUNIFICATION OF KOREA THROUGH DIRECT BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS, WITHOUT ANY OUTSIDE INTERVENTION. WE HOPE THAT MEANINGFUL STEPS WILL BE TAKEN IN THIS DIRECTION". JATTI'S LANGUAGE WAS ALMOST IDENTICAL TO THAT USED BY THE GOI IN 1975 DURING THE LAST VISIT OF A POLITICAL DELEGATION FROM THE DPRK.

3. THE GOI USED THE OCCASION OF A PRESS BRIEFING ON THE TALKS TO HIGHLIGHT THAT INDIA HAD MADE CLEAR TO KANG ITS VIEWS ON KASHMIR (REF C). ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS MARCH 16, VAJPAYEE TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO PUT THINGS "IN PROPER PERSPECTIVE", BECAUSE THE NORTH KOREANS HAD "FOR SOME TIME BEEN TALKING OF THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION IN KASHMIR". VAJPAYEE RE-
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PORTEDLY DREW KANG'S ATTENTION TO THE "OBSOLETE UN RESOLUTIONS" AND RECALLED THAT AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF THE SIMLA AGREEMENT THE TWO SIDES HAD DECIDED TO RESOLVE OUTSTANDING ISSUES "STRICTLY THROUGH BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS". IN DISCUSSING RELATIONS WITH CHINA, VAJPAYEE REPORTEDLY SAID THAT PENDING A SOLUTION TO THE BORDER QUESTION, INDIA WOULD ENDEAVOR TO IMPROVE RELATIONS IN OTHER FIELDS. UPON HIS DEPARTURE, KANG TOLD THE PRESS THAT HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH INDIAN LEADERS HAD BEEN "VERY FRANK" AND HAD COVERED DIVERSIFYING BILATERAL ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION.

4. ROK AMBASSADOR LEE BUM SUK TOLD THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR MARCH 22 THAT KANG'S VISIT HAD BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL. HE QUOTED AN MEA OFFICIAL AS TELLING HIM THAT "THE NORTH KOREANS HAD COME TO PROMOTE RELATIONS; THEY STAYED TO DEMOTE RELATIONS". (IN CONVERSATION WITH THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR EARLIER, MEA JOINT SECRETARY RANGANATHAN HINTED AT THE SAME OPINION. AFTER LISTENING FOR A WHILE TO THE TEDIOUS READING OF THE PREPARED DPRK TEXTS IN BOTH KOREAN AND ENGLISH, THE INDIANS FINALLY SUGGESTED THAT THEY JUST READ THE ENGLISH. RANGANATHAN ALSO SAID THAT KANG TOLD PRIME MINISTER DESAI THAT HE SHOULD VISIT NORTH KOREA BECAUSE THE NORTH KOREANS ARE SUCCESSFUL IN HEALTH REJUVENATION. THE

PRIME MINISTER (WHO PRIDES HIMSELF ON HIS HEALTH RGIMEN) RES-
PONDED THAT HE WAS NOT INTERESTED IN ALL THAT AND HE WAS IN THE
HANDS OF GOD. MORAJI ADDED THAT HE BELIEVED IN GOD AND THE NORTH
KOREANS DID NOT, AND THAT WAS THE GREATEST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN
THEM)

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5. ACCORDING TO AMBASSADOR LEE, THE INDIANS HAD TURNED DOWN THE
NORTH KOREANS REQUEST FOR A VISIT THREE TIMES SINCE JANUARY,
STATING THAT VARIOUS DETES PROPOSED WERE INCONVENIENT. FINALLY,
THE NEPALESE TELEPHONED DELHI AND ASKED THEM TO LET KANG COME OR
ELSE HE WOULD NOT LEAVE NEPAL. THE INDIANS AGREED, PROVIDED
THAT THERE WAS NO FORMAL AGENDA AND NO COMMUNIQUE AND THAT KANG
STAY IN DELHI FOR ONLY TWO DAYS DURING THE VISIT. ACCORDING TO
LEE, THE NORTH KOREANS TOUCHED ONLY LIGHTLY ON THE THEMES OF
UNIFICATION AND THE AMERICAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE PENINSULA
AND THAT THEY SAID THEY FAVORED PEACEFUL UNIFICATION AND OPPOSED
THE MEMBERSHIP OF EITHER SIDE IN THE UN. LEE SAID THAT KANG
HAD TAKEN A STRONGER LINE ON UNIFICATION IN THE BANQUET SPEECH

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AND THE INDIANS HAD TRIED TO GET THE LOCAL PRESS TO DOWNPLAY THIS BUT WRE UNSUCCESSFUL. LEE SAID THAT MEA SECRETARY (EAST) VELLODI TOLD HIM THAT N DISCUSSING THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT, THE NORTH KOREANS FOCUSSED ON THE BELGRADE SESSION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTERS RATHER THAN THE BURWU MEETING IN KABUL. VELLODI EXPECTED THAT THE NORTH KOREANS WOULD RAISE THE UNIFICATION ISSUE AT KABUL BUT THAT GIVEN THE BREVITY OF THE MEETING, THE ISSUE WOULD MERELY BE NOTED BY THE NAM.

6. ROK COUNSELOR HEUNG SIK LO MARCH 21 SHOWED EMBOFF ANOTHER REPORT OF VISIT, WHICH HE SAID EMANATED FROM AN MEA SOURCE, THAT PRESENTED NORTH KOREANS TAKING A SOMEWHAT TOUGHER LINE ON REUNIFICATION AND THE INDIANS BEING BLUNTER IN TURNING THEM OFF. ACCORDING TO THIS REPORT, KANG HAD MENTIONED THAT THERE WAS A MILITARY BUILDUP IN THE SOUTH, AND THE INDIANS RESPONDED THAT THEY HAD NO INFORMATION TO THAT EFFECT. THE REPORT ALSO SAID THAT THE NORTH KOREANS HAD WANTED TO MEET WITH DEFENSE MINISTER JAGJIVAN RAM BECAUSE THEY WRE INTERESTED IN SMALL ARMS, BUT THAT THE INDIANS HAD WANTED NO PART OF AN IMPLIED DEFENSE CONNECTION WITH THE NORTH KOREANS AND TOLD THEM RAM WAS UNAVAILABLE.

7. ON THE KASHMIR ISSUE, LEE SAID THAT THE INDIANS PUSHED VERY HARD AND THE NORTH KOREANS FOUND THIS DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH BECAUSE OF THEIR EARLIER STAND IN FAVOR OF THE PAKISTANIS. HENCE, THEY SAID NOTHING IN REPLY. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF MARCH 18, PAKISTANI CHARGE SHAHID AMIN EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE ANNOYANCE AT PRESS ACCOUNTS OF VAJPAYEE'S REMARKS ON KASHMIR, DESCRIBING THEM AS CONTRARY TO WHAT VAJPAYEE HAD SAID IN PAKISTAN ABOUT A WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE. AMIN ALSO OBJECTED TO THE REFERENCES TO THE OBSOLESCENCE OF THE UN RESOLUTIONS AND TO THE IMPLICATIONS THAT THE SIMLA ACCORD PRECLUDED ANY APPROACH EXCEPT BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS. AMIN ADDED THAT THE INDIANS MUST REALIZE THAT THERE WILL BE NO REAL PROGRESS ON TRADE OR OTHER ISSUES UNTIL THE KASHMIR QUESTION IS ADDRESSED.

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8. AMBASSADOR LEE WAS UNCONCERNED ABOUT THE KANG VISIT, SEEING IT AS PART OF THE USUAL DPRK ROUND OF SPRING VISITS ABROAD. LEE SAID THAT HE HAD EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH THE GOI AND SOUGHT TO PROJECT SOUTH KOREA AS A SEPARATE COUNTRY AND NOT SPEND HIS TIME AND EFFORT IN ATTACKING THE DPRK GOVERNMENT. HE THOUGHT THE INDIANS HAD COME TO ACCEPT SOUTH KOREA ON THOSE TERMS, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE OF STRONG TRADE TIES AND TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION. LEE WAS ALSO RELAXED ABOUT THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT,

NOTING THAT IN THE PAST YEAR THE ROK HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN
ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ANOTHER SIX NAM COUNTRIES.
GOHEEN

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